



Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage **TELESCOPE - MESSENGER**

United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio

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SUSAN BAUERNFEIND

Pioneer Missionary to Japan for the Evangelical Church

By Lowell and Betty Messerschmidt*

Susan Bauernfeind, born on a Minnesota farm on November 25, 1870, was the first single woman missionary sent to a foreign mission field by the former Evangelical Church. Sailing from San Francisco, she arrived in Japan, October 10, 1900, before there were paved streets in Tokyo.

Shortly after her arrival, she was invited to speak about the Christian faith to teenage girls who worked in a large cotton spinning mill. Challenges of being an industrial chaplain developed in several other factories as well.

When Susan established a home in the Koishikawa area, about five miles north of the Ginza, she started a Sunday School on the street each Sunday afternoon. This Sunday School grew into what was organized as the Koishikawa Evangelical Church in 1902. This was the first church of the denomination to become self-supporting in 1916.

Within two years after her arrival, she was convinced that Japanese cultural patterns hindered the growth of Christianity. It was almost impossible for a foreigner to visit a Japanese home. Because of customs and ceremonies, a house call took several hours, even for a pastor. What was the answer?

Susan became convinced that Japanese women must be evangelists. The result was the Tokyo Bible School which trained them to do the work of what today would be called parish workers. Susan Bauernfeind was appointed in 1904 by the Women's Missionary Society in the United States to be the first principal.

The Bible School expanded its program in

1920 to include evening classes for men as well as women who had to work during the day. At one time the enrollment was about 250 students, a number that decreased dramatically in the 1930s when the military spirit dominated Japanese society and support from the United States diminished during the great depression.



In 1910 a mother in one of the Evangelical Churches died in childbirth. Her husband was confronted not only with care for the new-born baby, but for two other little girls. Miss Bauernfeind and her co-workers cared for the

children, supporting them for two years out of their missionary salaries. This was the beginning of the Aisenryo ("Dormitory of the Spring of Love") Orphanage. After two years the Women's Missionary Society took over the support under Susan's supervision.

When the great earthquake and subsequent fires devastated Tokyo on September 1, 1923, Susan Bauernfeind led the 52 orphans out of the city to safety. She was assisted by Laura Mauk, a fellow missionary, and Sutejiro Hirono, at that time a layman and later one of the leading pastors in the Evangelical Church in Japan. A few months later Susan was honored by the Japanese Imperial Household for her humanitarian work. She was given a silver cup, engraved with the Emperor's chrysanthemum.

Miss Bauernfeind's salary as a missionary ranged from \$400 to \$1065 a year. Her ledgers show that she never gave less than ten per cent and often as much as twenty-five per cent of her income for the church and church-related activities.

At the advice of the United States Government, she returned to the United States in March of 1941, with Pearl Harbor following in December. Torn by loyalties to two countries, the United States, the land of her birth, and Japan, the land of her adoption, she criss-crossed the country with a message of reconciliation.

During the war years, the only news was that of the fire bombings of Tokyo in March of 1945. There were no details of what happened to the Christians and their churches.

Then came August, 1945, with the nuclear bombs. Hiroshima. Nagasaki. Surrender.

Susan's co-worker, Lois Kramer, who had been interned in Japan for the duration of the war, returned to the U.S. Susan went from her retirement home in Madison, Wisconsin, to Naperville, Illinois, to learn from Miss Kramer what had happened.

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Editor	Calvin H. Reber
Managing Editor	Betty A. O'Brien
Editorial Committee	Donald K. Gorrell
	James D. Nelson
	Elmer J. O'Brien

The situation was worse than she had imagined. After hearing the disastrous news for two days, Susan Bauernfeind was asked to speak in the chapel of the Evangelical Theological Seminary which was located in Naperville.

As she rose to speak, the entire student body and faculty were asking the question: How does a person who served for more than forty years building a successful missionary enterprise in the face of great difficulties react to the news that the Bible School, the Koishikawa Church and the Orphanage had all been destroyed? And how will she take news of the deaths of so many Christian friends and church leaders?

She began by referring to the Old Testament writings of Habakkuk: "Has not the Lord of Hosts ordained, that the toil of the nations ends in smoke, and the people wear themselves out for naught? It is the knowledge of the Eternal's Glory that shall fill the earth, as the waters cover the bed of the sea." (Hab.2:13-14, Moffatt's translation)

"The smoke of the burning," she stated, "speaks of the folly of hatred." She told the hushed congregation that two hundred and fifty churches in Tokyo had been destroyed while only thirty remained. She called the roll of those whom she knew to be among the casualties.

She continued, "I am grateful to God that it was my privilege to spend so many years in Japan and win so many to Christ. Those who have gone on to Glory through fire are with Him. They served and loved and now live victoriously with the Lord. Those who remain are courageous and taking a new lease on life. God will strengthen the Church of Christ in Japan through these faithful. They need our prayers."

Those listening said that her entire countenance glowed. That night, October 27, 1945, Susan Bauernfeind died of a broken heart, with millions of others a casualty of the war.

At the time of her death the family of Susan Bauernfeind suggested that money be given to help rebuild the work she had started. The idea was supported by the Mission Board of the Evangelical Church. A substantial sum was raised to build a new church in her honor.

The Susan Bauernfeind Memorial Church (also known as the Koishikawa-Hakusan Church) is located in the same mission compound where she had lived and worked for most of her ministry in Japan. The new sanc-

tuary was dedicated in June 1951, with Christian education facilities added later.

The Aisenryo Orphanage was re-established at Kazo City, about forty miles north of Tokyo. The Bible School was combined with other schools to form a theological seminary that offers evening as well as daytime courses.

Thus the main facets of her ministry continue. Like a tapestry woven of many interlocking threads, her work was to fulfill with God's help the many challenges and needs which pre-

sented themselves. Only her faith in God, developed through time with the scriptures and in prayer, enabled her to do such a tremendous amount of work in meeting the challenge.

*This brief account is based on Pastor Messerschmidt's full-length biography *Bauern Sensei: The Story of Susan Bauernfeind*, Fairway Press, 628 S. Main Street, Lima, OH 45804. The cost is \$8.50 plus \$3.50 postage-mailing.

OGIMACHI CHURCH

A Glimpse of United Brethren Missions in Japan

By Shoichi Tsujinaka

The October 12, 1990 issue of the United Methodist Reporter reported that the Ogimachi Church in Osaka had sent a gift of \$10,000 to the United Methodist Board of Global Ministries in gratitude for a \$10,000 construction grant from the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1957. Moreover, each year at its annual meeting the church offers thanks for the United States church. We thought this story of the strength and gratitude of the Japanese church required a follow-up, and we requested a story from the present pastor. He replied with the following history which has been edited to fit Telescope-Messenger space requirements. The history, based on Japanese sources, differs in some details from data available here, particularly in reference to names, but this is the Japanese record of the early United Brethren Church in Japan as well as the Ogimachi Church in Osaka (editor).

According to a "History of the United Brethren Church in Japan" compiled by a committee of ten United Brethren pastors headed by Bishop Chyukichi Yasuda, DD, there were 25 churches in 1940 after 40 years evangelistic outreach to the Japanese people by the United Brethren Church since 1895.

At first the missionary activities were mostly in the Tokyo area. The first missionary to Japan was Rev. Kingoro Nakajima, a Japanese who had been a member of the First United Brethren Church in Dayton, Ohio. He was ordained by Bishop Wiebur and sent back to Japan. He had two Christian friends who went back to Japan with him. They were Rev. Sokichi Doi and Mr. Umekichi Yoneyama, the founder of the Rotary Club in Japan. They arrived in Japan in November 1895. Rev. Doi started his missionary work in Tokyo, and the first church of the United Brethren in Christ was organized in Kyobashi-

ku, Tokyo. There were only several members. Then Rev. Doi was obliged to move to Shinga Prefecture about 400 miles from Tokyo, and the second United Brethren church was built there in 1896. Both the beginning and the expansion to Shinga Prefecture in central Japan were achieved not by American but by Japanese workers. Thus from the beginning of the United Brethren missionary work, the administration of the church had been entrusted to the hands of Japanese ministers. This was the remarkable policy of the United Brethren Church.

In 1898, three years after the appointment of Rev. Kingoro Nakajima, Rev. and Mrs. A. T. Howard were assigned to Japan. Soon Rev. Howard became a prominent leader of the whole United Brethren Church in Japan, and in 1912 he was assigned to be Bishop of all foreign districts including China, the Philippines and Africa.

When the first annual conference of the United Brethren Church in Japan was held at Tokyo YMCA on July 12, 1901, there were representatives of six churches and the following missionaries: Rev. and Mrs. A. T. Howard, Rev. and Mrs. J. Edgar Knipp and Rev. and Mrs. Joseph Corsand. Rev. Howard conducted the conference as chairman.

After this time churches were organized in eastern, central and western Japan. The above mentioned missionaries helped these churches where native pastors had been laboring. In 1910 the total membership of the United Brethren Church in Japan was 662 with 744 Sunday school children. Then in 1917 the membership increased to 1,390 with 982 Sunday school children. At the 17th annual conference there were 25 churches which sent their delegates to the conference.

Our Osaka United Brethren Church was started by a zealous layman of the Kyoto United Brethren Church in 1910 with the assistance of Rev. Takejiro Ishiguro. Mr. Toda had been an authorized lay preacher and had been very active to win the souls of the Osaka people for Christ. We have a few precious records written by Mr. Toda at an early stage of this church. We can sense his ardent evangelistic zeal between the lines of the records. Seven members of his family became Christians, and they did superb activities for the glory of God in Osaka.

While the growing little church was not strong enough to support itself, monthly assistance was granted to the congregation until it reached self-support. This was achieved under the fifth pastor appointed by Bishop Chyukichi Yasuda. He appointed his beloved disciple, Rev. Shimaō Nakaji, a graduate of Otterbein College and the University of Chicago, to the Osaka United Brethren Church in 1937.

Rev. Nakaji was born of a wealthy family in 1900 and while he was young he was baptized by Rev. Yasuda in the Kyoto United Brethren Church. So Rev. Yasuda thought that Rev. Nakaji might be self-supportive by the assistance of his wealthy father. But the actual situation was different from that. In order to become self-supportive the congregation had to struggle. Especially Rev. and Mrs. Nakaji had to sacrifice themselves for the sake of the independence of the congregation. Still the church continued to grow step by step.

The Osaka United Brethren Church became Ogimachi Church in 1940 after the birth of the

United Church of Christ in Japan, consisting of 25 denominations. But during World War II Rev. Nakaji worked at a dry battery factory on weekdays and on Sundays he preached at the church. As the war advanced young men were required to enter military service, and most of the congregation became women and children. In the midst of this serious situation Rev. Nakaji suffered T.B. and was obliged to rest at his home in a rural area of Kyoto Prefecture. Worship services and prayer meetings were maintained by the tiny congregation.

In 1945 Rev. Nakaji recovered from his infirmity, and after the end of the war he was able to start new evangelistic activities. People were seeking for new dimensions to life, such as expressed in Christian faith. So every church was becoming a source of new spiritual life attracting young and old. Unfortunately Ogimachi Church had lost its building by an air-raid in 1945. But a room of the Osaka YMCA was opened to the worship service of the church.

Around this time I was invited to the service by Rev. Nakaji, for he had been teaching English at the Osaka Miyakojima Technical College, where I was a student. It was the beginning of my encounter with the Christian faith. I was baptized by Rev. Nakaji on Easter 1947.

The congregation of Ogimachi Church had been growing year after year. So a building plan was started in 1947. Dr. P. S. Meyer, one of six delegates who were sent to Japan after the war to assist reconstruction of devastated churches, helped our church in many ways. He was an outstanding Evangelical United Brethren missionary.

Rev. and Mrs. Nakaji had started new preaching places in Osaka, Hyogo and Kyoto areas. There were nine in all. Some of them became strong churches attracting many people. Beside this, both Rev. and Mrs. Nakaji were responsible for educational outreach in the form of kindergarten, nursery schools and baby centers. Four institutions were established by their efforts and assistance. Through these activities the Ogimachi congregation continued growing. Three buildings were erected between 1945 and 1957. At the second occasion the EUB Church granted us \$5,000, and on the third occasion in 1957, \$10,000 was granted. So, many members have been remembering such assistance together with the missionaries sent to Japan.

When Rev. and Mrs. Nakaji were appointed to this church in 1937 only four people wor-

shipped at their first Easter service. When they retired in 1975 several hundred people joined in the retirement worship service. From 1975 until now Rev. Ms. Hirakata, once a student at United Theological Seminary and present associate pastor and myself have been serving here. Both of us have been Rev. Nakaji's disciples. Our

average Sunday morning service attendance for 1990 was about 148. In the Osaka area there are about 130 churches of the United Church of Christ in Japan. Our church has been one of the most influential of these. Our annual expenditure is about \$220,000. We have about 290 active members.

News Notes

Dr. Bernard L. Cook was awarded second prize for his essay "Glory Departed—But Not Forgotten" in a historical essay contest sponsored by Kansas East and Kansas West Conferences. It dealt with Fort Scott and the early days of the UB witness in Kansas.

Rev. Robert W. Koenig presented a paper on "The German Heritage of United Methodists in Indiana" at a conference last March co-sponsored by the Indiana German Society and the Indiana Religious History Association under the theme of "German Religion in Indiana."

The history of Boehms Chapel, featured in an article in the last *Telescope-Messenger*, has been told more completely in a new book by **Abram W. Sangrey** called *Temple of Limestone*, available from Boehm's Chapel Society, 13 West Boehm Road, Willow Street, PA 17584, at \$9.95 plus tax and mailing.

The two hundred year history of Otterbein United Methodist Church, Hagerstown, Maryland, has been written up in a 27 page piece with pictures, by the present pastor, **Wilson A. Shearer**.

In the *University of Chicago Magazine*, October 1991, **Dr. Guy Buswell**, a pioneering teacher in education and psychology, in celebrating his 100th birthday, recalled how the dean of York College, Nebraska, **C. E. Ashcraft**, influenced his career.

The *Christian Century*, 16 October 1991 included "A Kinder, Gentler View of Missions." Written by newswriter **Clarke M. Thomas**, the son of missionaries who served in the UB mission in Sierra Leone, it reports the appreciation of present African leaders for the missionaries and the strength of the Sierra Leone Church.

The Division of the Evangelical Association, 1891-1922

By **Dr. K. James Stein**

The Evangelical Association "slowly and painfully disintegrated."¹ Paul Eller's words, aptly describing an event that happened exactly a century ago, conjure up for the reader the pain, acrimony and bitterness of denominational division and call for reflection once again upon the causes, course and resolution of this tragic event.

The original source of rupture was theological. Not all preachers in the Evangelical Association espoused its strong adherence to the doctrine of Christian perfection. John Hamilton, an early English-language preacher, was dismissed in part for his variance from the denomination's holiness stance. Nicholas Gehr resigned as editor of the *Evangelical Messenger* in 1849 and joined the German Reformed Church after being admonished on this issue.

The major mid-century contenders over Christian perfection were W. W. Orwig (1810-1889) and Solomon Neitz (1821-1885). Both at sessions of the East Pennsylvania conference and at the General Conference sessions of 1859 and 1867 Orwig cited Neitz for theological error. Neitz repeatedly repented, but continued criticizing the strict holiness position.

The theological disagreement between these two very capable clergymen affected their professional lives. Orwig was elected bishop in 1859. At the 1863 General Conference, however, the Neitz faction prevented Orwig's reelection and Orwig's followers dashed Neitz's episcopal hopes.

Increased bitterness resulted when J. J. Esher (1828-1901), a supporter of Orwig's holiness emphasis and a rigorous administrator,

was elected bishop in 1863 and when Neitz's satirical poem criticizing Bishops Long and Esher was published by editor Rudolph Dubs in the *Christliche Botschafter* in 1869. The Neitz faction rejoiced in the episcopal election of Rudolph Dubs (1837-1915) in 1875.

Matters worsened when Bishop Esher brought charges at the 1887 General Conference against the Hartzler brothers—one superintendent of the Japan mission and the other editor of the *Evangelical Messenger*. The latter's dismissal by a 57 to 47 vote was "the last straw" for the Dubs faction. Now charges and counter-charges were exchanged; church trials were held; bishops were locked out of church buildings when they came to hold annual conference; congregations split and families experienced inner tension.

Two general conferences were held in 1891 instead of one. The representatives of Bishop Esher's three-fifths majority met in Indianapolis. Bishop Dubs's two-fifths minority delegates gathered in Philadelphia—each claiming to be the true general conference. In 1894 representatives of the seceding minority met in Naperville, Illinois, to organize the United Evangelical Church, a denomination virtually the same in faith and polity as the Evangelical Association except that its bishops were limited to two consecutive four-year terms, lay representatives were seated at annual and general conference and congregations held title to their own property. With costly litigation and recriminatory exchanges the sons and daughters of Jacob Albright had divided into two churches.

Fortunately, unitive impulses emerged when Joseph Baumeister and Walter J. Miller took their United Evangelical and Evangelical Association youth, respectively, to a Gypsy Smith revival in Chicago in 1907. The ecumenical spirit there convinced these young people that Albright's descendants should and could be reunited. They inspired the formal union efforts that culminated in the reunion of the two bodies in 1922 to create the Evangelical Church with some 260,000 members. The approximately 20,000 United Evangelicals who resisted reunion formed the Evangelical Congregational Church, which still continues.

In retrospect one cannot merely note the irony that a holiness emphasis should arouse much that is unholy and sinful. Both sides continued to stress sanctification. Nor should the episcopacy be cited as the sole contention;

both sides retained bishops (although the United Evangelicals with greater limits) and reunited with episcopacy intact. One cannot simply charge the rupture to ethnicity, although Terry Heisey makes a persuasive argument that the German language and recent immigrant sections of the denomination stayed with the Evangelical Association, with the older English-speaking americanized areas favoring the United Evangelicals.² One can only grieve that from a multiplicity of causes the spirit of intransigence, competition and suspicion ran rampant with annual conferences, congregations and families left victims over years of disruption.

Those who assess this division a century later must acknowledge that their detached objectivity may help them understand but not feel the issues as did the participants. They must likewise admit that this tragic separation contained within it the many features of disunion that have plagued the church before and since. Fortunately, they can rejoice that visionary youth and another generation of denominational leaders early in our present century were able to lead in burying the disharmonies of the past with the spirit of cooperation and reunion for the sake of Christ.

Endnotes

1. *These Evangelical United Brethren* (Dayton, Ohio: Otterbein Press, 1950), 75.
2. "Immigration as a Factor in the Division of the Evangelical Association," *Methodist History* 19 (October 1980): 41-57.

About this Issue

In harmony with the missionary education emphasis on Japan, this issue features missionary stories from the Evangelical and the United Brethren traditions. The reflection on the division of the Evangelical Association was prompted by the 100th anniversary of that event. Information on the 1992 General Conference consultation and on the Reber Memorial Fund were supplied by our Center Director, Elmer J. O'Brien and Advisory Board member James D. Nelson. Due to space limitations, Millard J. Miller's article "The Church Harp" and the regular *Telescope-Messenger* columns will appear in the next issue.

Center to Sponsor General Conference Consultation

The Center will sponsor a consultation on "The Mission of Methodism in a New Europe" for European delegates and invited American guests to the 1992 United Methodist Church General Conference. The consultation will be held at Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, on Sunday and Monday, May 3rd and 4th.

The chief purpose in sponsoring such a consultation is to foster dialogue and community among European Methodists. It is anticipated that by also involving a select group of North American Methodists it will be possible to foster on their part a better understanding of the European situation and also underscore the opportunities and problems which the church in Europe now faces. Participation by persons from both continents will help to make visible a spiritual connectionism which is implicit in our common church structures, but which is often forgotten or neglected in deliberation and dialogue.

As all of us know the political and economic situation in Europe and the former Soviet Union has changed dramatically in the last two years. Events have moved with great speed throughout that region of the world, initiating changes thought impossible only a few years ago. A new epoch has dawned for the churches; indeed, the churches have played their part in these events. In East Germany the Protestant churches nurtured and sustained a peaceful revolution which toppled the Communist regime. The Vatican, under the leadership of a Polish pope, encouraged the formation of Solidarity and advocated a unified, Christian Europe. The Eastern Orthodox Church in the former Soviet Union has rebounded from decades of persecution and hostility with surprising vigor and strength. These changes present both new challenges and dangers but, at the same time, open new possibilities for mission, growth and service for the churches.

The Center feels singularly fortunate to have secured Bishop Ruediger R. Minor of Dresden, Germany, as one of two plenary speakers to address the consultation. Bishop Minor is currently charged with providing episcopal leadership in efforts to coordinate mission initiatives

for Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. His experience as a pastor, theological educator and church leader provide him with a rich background from which to address the consultation theme. The second plenary address will be given by Dr. Paul B. Mojzes, Professor of Religious Studies at Rosemont College, Philadelphia. Dr. Mojzes is Yugoslavian by birth, an ordained United Methodist minister, has written several books on postwar Eastern Europe and is the editor of *Occasional Papers on Religion in Eastern Europe*.

At the 1988 General Conference in St. Louis, the Center sponsored a similar consultation on the theme, "Identity and Diversity within European United Methodism." The intention of the Center in sponsoring these consultations is to offer United Methodism aspects of the Evangelical United Brethren life and tradition which can enrich and strengthen the connectionism of the church. A predominant feature of the Evangelical United Brethren identity was its minority status within the North American context. People of this minority heritage have long appreciated the value of establishing and cultivating personal relationships with each other. This intimate sense of community and spiritual cohesion is viewed as complementing the Methodist tradition of organizational integrity and structural complexity. It is anticipated that the European General Conference delegates will be drawn into dialogue and closer collaboration with each other while the American United Methodists will come to better understand and appreciate the new spiritual order emerging in Europe and the former Soviet Union.

More News Notes

The Bethany Villager, publication of the United Methodist Bethany Village in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, ran a series recently on "Our Exciting Religious Heritage—Centering on the Historic Names at Bethany Village." Dr. Thomas W. Guinivan did the one on Philip William Otterbein and Dr. Carl Schneider did that on Jacob Albright.

The Audrie E. Reber Memorial Award

by James D. Nelson

The Center has just issued the first announcement of the Audrie E. Reber Memorial Award; the deadline for submission of entries is October 1, 1992. This is to be an "annual award . . . to students enrolled in institutions of higher education who submit the best papers on some aspect of Evangelical United Brethren history, theology or church life." This program designed to promote interest in the study of the EUB heritage is the most recent result of the Audrie E. Reber Memorial Fund, an endowment at United Theological Seminary.

Soon after Audrie Reber's death in 1987, her husband Calvin (now editor of the *Telescope-Messenger*) presented a generous gift to the Center in her memory. The use of this gift was left entirely in the hands of the Advisory Board which decided to use it as seed for an endowment in her perpetual memory. Further contributions have been made in this memory by Dr. Reber and by others, sufficient to provide an income adequate for the ongoing award program that is now announced.

Audrie Reber is well known across the church. A native of York, Pennsylvania, she was nurtured and prepared for her vocation as a missionary to China in the local church and at Lebanon Valley College, where she met and married her life partner, Calvin H. Reber. The Rebers served in China beginning in 1939.

Their service in China was interrupted from 1942 to 1946 by the war with Japan and ended when China was closed to Western missionaries by the Communist revolution. At that point the Rebers came to Dayton where Calvin took up duties as Vera Blinn Professor of Missions at United Theological Seminary. Audrie was active as a churchwoman, a published historian (*Women United For Mission*, 1969), and fundamental of all support and caregiver to her husband and children.

It is particularly fitting that she should be remembered with relation to the Center for Evangelical United Brethren Heritage because of her service as a charter member of its Advisory Board and an interviewer in its extensive oral history project. Any who wish to make memorial of this valued and beloved sister, Audrie E. Reber, either by participation in the Award program or by contribution to the Memorial Fund, may address inquiries to the Director of the Center.

Getting It Right

Dr. and Mrs. Arthur Core should have been listed among the founders of the Center for Evangelical United Brethren Heritage in the first issue of the *Telescope-Messenger*.

Center for the Evangelical United Brethren Heritage
United Theological Seminary
1810 Harvard Boulevard
Dayton, OH 45406

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